

# SUCCESS

REGIONS 1 & 4, STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY

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*It was a win-win situation for all involved.*

*The North Dakota Forest Service crew was able to stay employed and the Turtle Mountain Band of the Chippewa Indians was able to get a hazardous forest situation cleaned up."*

*Faron Krueger,  
North Dakota  
Forest Service*

## Woody Debris Cleared From Tornado Hit Area in North Dakota

### ***North Dakota Forest Service Recovery Act Project Improves Safety and Provides Firewood for Residents of Turtle Mountains***

After a tornado passed through the Turtle Mountains in North Dakota in 2008, so many trees were damaged around homes on the Turtle Mountain Reservation that some residents were reluctant to let children play outside due to safety concerns about falling trees.



North Dakota Forest Service fire crew members

The Turtle Mountains, located roughly 150 miles north of Bismarck near the Canadian border, are rolling hills with dense stands of overmature aspen and other hardwood trees.

The Reservation of the Turtle Mountain Band of the Chippewa Indians has one of

the highest wildland-urban densities in North Dakota, with an average of 28 homes per acre within the heavily forested reservation.

The Tribal chairwoman suggested to the North Dakota Forest Service that the Turtle Mountains could use some state forestry assistance. When the Forest Service's State and Private Forestry asked the North Dakota State Forester if there were any potential projects that could fit into a Recovery Act grant focused on reducing hazardous fuels, a match was made with the Turtle Mountains situation.

Fire management staff of the North Dakota Forest Service worked with tribal leaders, the tribal forester, and Bureau of Indian Affairs forestry staff to identify project locations within the affected area. The focus was to follow the Tribe's forest management plan and remove hazardous fuels and safety hazards from the densely populated area affected by the tornado.

### Contact

**Angela Farr**  
US Forest Service  
State and Private Forestry  
Biomass Utilization  
Missoula, Montana  
Office: (406) 329-3521  
afarr@fs.fed.us



Debris piles after clean up work completed

Original estimates were that 110 acres could be treated with the \$100,000 grant. But by the end of the 14 months it took to complete the project, almost 180 acres were treated.

The North Dakota Forest Service fire crews based out of Bismarck stayed on the project site during the work week and the Tribe provided the crew housing and some equipment.

The crews cut, cleared, and piled trees, brush, and woody debris. Useable material was cut and stacked for firewood; about 75% of the material cleared is being used as firewood.

Many Tribal members of the area rely on wood for heating and so they were able to help themselves to the piles as a ready source of firewood.

Faron Krueger, North Dakota Forest Service fire management specialist who oversaw the projects says, "The project cleaned up the areas, removed hazards, and improved the way the area looks".

Faron considers the project a win-win for all involved. The crew was able to stay employed and the Tribe was able to get a hazardous forest situation cleaned up